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# A SATYR AGAINST WIT.

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*LONDON:*

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# A Satyr againſt WIT.

WHO can forbear, and tamely ſilent ſit,
And ſee his Native Land undone by Wit?
Boaſt not, *Britannia*, of thy happy Peace,
What if Campaigns and Sea-Engagements ceaſe,
Wit a worſe Plague does mightily encreaſe?
Some monſtrous Crimes to Ages paſt unknown
Have ſurely pull'd this heavy Judgment down.
Fierce Inſect-Wits draw out their noiſy Swarms,
And threaten Ruin more than Foreign Arms.
O'er all the Land the hungry Locuſts ſpread
Gnaw every Plant, taint every flowry Bed,
And crop each budding Virtue's tender Head.

How happy were the old unpoliſhed Times,
As free from Wit as other modern Crimes?
As our Forefathers Vig'rous were and Brave;
So they were Virtuous, Wiſe, Diſcreet and Grave,
Deteſting both alike the Wit and Knave.
They juſtly Wits and Fools believ'd the ſame,
And Jeſter was for both the common Name.

Their

Their Minds for Empire form'd would never quit
Their noble Roughneſs, and diſſolve in Wit.
For Buſineſs born and bred to Martial Toil,
They rais'd the Glory of *Britannia*'s Iſle.
Then ſhe her dreadful Enſigns did advance,
To curb *Iberia*, and to conquer *France*.
But this degenerate, looſe and fooliſh Race
Are all turn'd Wits, and their great Stock debaſe.
Our Learning daily ſinks, and Wit is grown
The ſenſeleſs Converſation of the Town.
Enervated with this our Youth have loſt
That ſtubborn Virtue, which we once could boaſt.
The Plague of Wit prevails, I fear 'tis vain
Now to attempt its Fury to reſtrain.
It takes Men in the Head, and in the Fit
They loſe their Senſes, and are gone in Wit.
By various ways their Frenzy they expreſs,
Some with looſe Lines run haring to the Preſs,
In Lewdneſs ſome are Wits, ſome only Wits in Dreſs.
Some ſeiz'd like *Gravar*, with Convulſions ſtrain
Always to ſay fine Things, but ſtrive in vain
Urg'd with a dry *Teneſmus* of the Brain.

Had but the People ſcar'd with Danger run
To ſhut up *Wills*, where firſt this Plague begun:
Had they the firſt infected Men convey'd
Strait to *Moorfields*, the Peſt-houſe for the Head;
The wild Contagion might have been ſuppreſt,
Some few had fal'n, but we had ſav'd the reſt.
An Act like this had been a good Defence
Againſt our great Mortality of Senſe.
But now th' Infection ſpreads, the Bills run high,
At the laſt Gaſp of Senſe ten thouſand ly.

We meet fine Youth in every Houſe and Street,
With all the deadly Tokens out, of Wit.

*Vannine* that look'd on all the Danger paſt,
Becauſe he ſcap'd ſo long, is ſeiz'd at laſt.
By Pox and Hunger and by *D*———*n* bit
He grins and ſnarles, and in his dogged Fit
Froths at the Mouth, a certain Sign of Wit.

*Craper* runs madly midſt the ſickeſt Crowd,
And fain would be infected, if he cou'd.
Under the Means he lies, frequents the Stage,
Is very leud, and does at Learning rage.
Pity that ſo much Labour ſhould be loſt
By ſuch a healthful Conſtitution croſt.
Againſt th' Aſſaults of Wit his Make is proof,
Still his ſtrong Nature works the Poiſon off.
He ſtill eſcapes, but yet is wondrous pleas'd
Wit to recite, and to be thought Diſeas'd.
So Hypocrites in Vice in this vile Town
To Wickedneſs pretend, that's not their own.

A Bantring Spirit has our Men poſſeſt,
And Wiſdom is become a ſtanding Jeſt.
Wit does of Virtue ſure Deſtruction make;
Who can produce a Wit and not a Rake?
Wiſe Magiſtrates leud Wit do therefore hate,
The Bane of Virtue's Treaſon to the State.
While Honour fails and Honeſty decays,
In vain we beat our Heads for Means and Ways.
What well-form'd Government or State can laſt,
When Wit has laid the Peoples Virtue waſt?

The *Mob* of Wits is up to ſtorm the Town,
To pull all Virtue and right Reaſon down.
Quite to ſubvert Religion's ſacred Fence,
To ſet up Wit, and pull down common Senſe.
Our Libraries they gut, and ſhouting bear
The Spoils of ruin'd Churches in the Air.
Their Captain *Tom* does at their Head appear,
And *S*——*d* in his Gown brings up the Rear.
Aloud the Church and Clergy they condemn,
Curſe all their Order, and their God blaſpheme.
Againſt all Springs of Learning they declare,
Againſt Religion's Nurſeries, and ſwear
They will no *All*——*e*, *M*——*ll*, or *Ch*——*t* ſpare:
But the leud Crew affirm by all that's good
They'll ne'er diſperſe unleſs they've *B*——*ly*'s Blood.
For that ill-natur'd Critic has undone
The rareſt Piece of Wit that e'er was ſhown.
Till his rude Stroaks had threſh'd the empty Sheaf,
We thought there had been ſomething elſe than Chaff.
Crown'd with Applauſe this Maſter Critic ſits,
And round him ly the Spoils of ruin'd Wits.
How great a Man! What Rev'rence were his due,
Could he ſuppreſs the Critic's *Faſtus* too?
As certain Words will Lunaticks enrage,
Who juſt before appear'd ſedate and ſage.
So do but *Lock* or *Books* or *Bentley* name,
The Wit's in clammy Sweats, or in a Flame.

Horror and Shame! What would the Madmen have?
They dig up learned *Bernard*'s peaceful Grave.
The Sacred-Urn of famous *Stillingfleet*,
We ſee prophan'd by the leud Sons of Wit.
The skilful *Ty*——*n*'s Name they dare invade,
And yet they are undone without his Aid.

*Ty——n* with baſe Reproaches they purſue,
Juſt as his *Moorfields* Patients uſe to do.
For next to Virtue, Learning they abhor,
Laugh at Diſcretion, but at Buſineſs more.
A Wit's an idle, wretched Fool of Parts,
That hates all Liberal and Mechanick Arts.

Wit does enfeeble and debauch the Mind,
Before to Buſineſs or to Arts inclin'd.
How uſeleſs is a fauntring empty Wit,
Only to pleaſe with Jeſts at Dinner fit?
What hopeful Youths for Bar and Bench deſign'd,
Seduc'd by Wit, have learned *Coke* declin'd?
For what has Wit to do with Senſe or Law?
Can that in Titles find or mend a Flaw?
Can Wit ſupply great *T——by*'s nervous Senſe?
Or *S——r*'s more than *Roman* Eloquence?
Which way has *H——lt* gain'd Univerſal Fame?
What makes the World thy Praiſes, *F——ch*, proclaim?
And charming *P——s* what advanc'd thy Name?
'Twas Application, Knowledge of the Laws,
And your vaſt Fund of Senſe, gain'd you Applauſe.
The Law will ne'er ſupport the bant'ring Breed,
A *Sl——* may ſometimes there, but Wits can ne'er ſucceed.

*R——t——ffe* has Wit, and laviſhes away
More in his Converſation every Day,
Than would ſupply a modern Writer's Play.
But 'tis not that, but the great Maſter's Skill,
Who with more Eaſe can cure, than *C——h* kill,
That does the grateful Realm with his Applauſes fill.

Thy Learning *G——ns*, and thy Judgment *H——w*,
Make you in envy'd Reputation grow.

This

This drew Invectives on you, all agree,
From the lean Small-craft of your Faculty.
Had you been Wits you had been both ſecure
From Buſineſs, and for Satyr too Obſcure,
Ill-natur'd, Arrogant, and very Poor.
But let Invectives ſtill your Names aſſail,
Your Buſineſs is to Cure, and theirs to Rail.
Let 'em proceed and make your Names a Sport
In leud Lampoons, they've Time and Leiſure for't.
Deſpiſe their Spite, the Thouſands whom you raiſe
From threaten'd Death will bleſs you all their Days,
And ſpend the Breath you ſav'd, in juſt and laſting Praiſe.
But Wit as now 'tis manag'd would undo
The Skill and Virtues we admire in you.
In *G*—— the Wit the Doctor has undone,
In *S*——*d* the Divine, Heav'ns guard poor *Ad*——*ſon*
An able Senator is loſt in *M*——*l*,
And a fine Scholar ſunk by Wit in *B*——*l*.
After his fooliſh Rhimes both Friends and Foes
Conclude they know, who did not write his Proſe.

Wit does our Schools and Colleges invade,
And has of Letters vaſt Deſtruction made.
Has laid the Muſes choiceſt Gardens waſt,
Broke their Incloſures and their Groves defac't.
We ſtrive in Jeſts each other to exceed,
And ſhall e'er long forget to Write or Read.
Unleſs a Fund were ſettled once that cou'd
Make our deficient Senſe and Learning good,
Nothing can be expected, for the Debt
By this looſe Age contracted, is ſo great,
To ſet the Muſes mortgag'd Acres free,
Our Bankrupt Sons muſt ſell out-right the Fee.

The preſent Age has all their Treaſure ſpent,
They can't the Int'reſt pay at Five *per Cent.*
What to diſcharge it can we hope to raiſe
From *D——fy*'s, or from Poet *D——n——*'s Plays,
Or *G——th*'s Lampoon with little in't but Praiſe?

O *S——er*, *T——bot*, *D——ſet*, *M——gue*,
*Gr——y*, *Sh——ld*, *C——d——ſh*, *P——ke*, *V——n*, you
Who in *Parnaſſus* have Imperial Sway,
Whom all the Muſes Subjects here obey,
Are in your Service and receive your Pay;
Exert your Soveraign Power, in Judgment ſit
To regulate the Nation's Grievance, Wit.
Pity the cheated Folks that every Day
For Copper Wit good Sterling Silver pay.
If once the Muſes Chequer would deny
To take falſe Wit, 'twould loſe its currency.
Not a baſe Piece would paſs, that paſs'd before
Juſt waſh'd with Wit, or thinly plated o'er.

Set forth your Edict, let it be enjoyn'd
That all defective Species be recoyn'd.
*St. E——m——t* and *R——r* both are fit
To overſee the Coining of our Wit.
Let theſe be made the Maſters of Eſſay,
They'll every Piece of Metal touch and weigh,
And tell which is too light, which has too much Allay.
'Tis true, that when the courſe and worthleſs Droſs
Is purg'd away, there will be mighty Loſs.
Ev'n *C——e*, *S——n*, *Manly W——ly*,
When thus refin'd will grievous Suff'rers be.
Into the melting Pot when *D——n* comes,
What horrid Stench will riſe, what noiſome Fumes?

How will he ſhrink, when all his leud Allay,
And wicked Mixture ſhall be purg'd away?
When once his boaſted Heaps are melted down,
A Cheſt full ſcarce will yield one Sterling Crown.
Thoſe who will *D——n——s* melt and think to find
A goodly Maſs of Bullion left behind,
Do, as th' *Hibernian* Wit, who as 'tis told,
Burnt his gilt Leather to collect the Gold.

But what remains will be ſo pure, 'twill bear
Th' Examination of the moſt ſevere.
'Twill *S——r*'s Scales and *T——bot*'s Teſt abide,
And with their Mark pleaſe all the World beſide.

But when our Wit's call'd in, what will remain
The Muſes learned Commerce to maintain?
How penſive will our Beaus and Ladies ſit?
They'll mutiny for want of ready Wit.
That ſuch a failure no Man may incenſe,
Let us erect a Bank for Wit and Senſe.
A Bank whoſe current Bills may Payment make,
Till new Mill'd Wit ſhall from the Mint come back.

Let *S——er*, *D——ſet*, *Sh——ld*, *M——gue*,
Lend but their Names, the Project then will do.
The Bank is fixt if theſe will under-write,
They pay the vaſteſt Sums of Wit at ſight.
Theſe are good Men, in whom we all agree,
Their Notes for Wit are good Security.
*Duncombs* and *Claytons* in *Parnaſſus* all,
Who cannot ſink unleſs the Hill ſhould fall.
Their Bills, tho' ne'er ſupported by Truſtees,
Will through *Parnaſſus* circulate with eaſe.

If theſe come in, the Bank will quickly fill,
All will be ſcrambling up *Parnaſſus* Hill.
They'll crowd the Muſes Hall and throng to write
Great Sums of Wit, and will be Gainers by't.

*V*——*e* and *C*——*e* both are Wealthy, they
Have Funds of Standard-Senſe, need no Allay,
And yet mix'd Metal oft they paſs away.
The Bank may ſafely their Subſcriptions take,
But let 'em for their Reputation's ſake,
Take care their Payments they in Sterling make.

*Codron* will under-write his *Indian* Wit,
Far-fetch'd indeed, ſo 'twill the Ladies fit.
By Hearſay he's a Scholar, and they ſay
The Man's a ſort of Wit too in his way.

Let 'em receive whatever *P*——*r* brings,
In nobler Strains no happy Genius ſings.
'Tis Complaiſance when to divert his Friends,
He to *facetious Fancies* condeſcends.

*T*——*e* will ſubſcribe, but ſet no Payment-Day,
For his ſlow Muſe you muſt with Patience ſtay,
He's honeſt, and as Wit comes in, will pay.

But how would all this new Contrivance Prize,
How high in value would their Actions riſe?
Would *Fr*——*k* engraft his ſolid, manly Senſe,
His Learning *L*——*k*, *Fl*——*d* his Eloquence.
The Bank when thus eſtabliſh'd will ſupply
Small Places, for the little, loitt'ring Fry
That follow *G*——*th*, or at *Will Ur*——'s ply.

Their

Their Station will be low, but ne'ertheleſs
For this Proviſion they ſhould Thanks expreſs:
'Tis ſad to be a Wit and Dinnerleſs.

*T*——*n* the great Wit-Jobber of the Age,
And all the Muſes Broakers will engage
Their ſeveral Friends to cry the Actions up,
And all the railing Mouths of Envy ſtop.

Ye Lords who o'er the Muſes Realm preſide,
Their Int'reſts manage and their Empire guide;
Regard your Care, regard the ſacred State
Laid by Invaders waſt and deſolate.
*Tartars* and *Scythians* have in barb'rous Bands
Riffled the Muſes and o'er-run their Lands.
The Native Subjects who in Peace enjoy'd
The happy Seat, are by the Sword deſtroy'd.
Gardens and Groves *Parnaſſus* did adorn,
Condemn'd to Thiſtles now, and curſt with Thorn.
Inſtead of Flowers and Herbs of wholſom uſe,
It does rank Weeds and pois'nous Plants produce.
Fitter to be for *Witches* a Retreat,
*Owls*, *Satyrs*, *Monkies*, than the Muſes Seat.
Ev'n theſe debauch'd by *D*——*n* and his Crew,
Turn Bawds to Vice and wicked Aims purſue.
Therefore ſome juſt and wholeſome Laws ordain,
That may this wild Licentiouſneſs reſtrain.
To Virtue and to Merit have regard,
To puniſh learn, you know how to reward.

Let thoſe Correction have, and not Applauſe,
That Heav'n affront and ridicule its Laws.
No ſober Judge will Atheiſm e'er permit
To paſs for Senſe, or Blaſphemy for Wit.

Declare

Declare that what's Obſcene ſhall give Offence,
*Let want of Decency be want of Senſe.* Roſcom.

Send out your Guards to ſcow'r the Ways and ſeize
The Footpads, Outlaws, Rogues and Rapparees,
That in the Muſes Country rob and kill,
And make *Parnaſſus* worſe than *Shooter*'s Hill.
Poetic Juſtice ſhould on theſe be ſhown;
Or ſoon the Muſes State muſt be undone.
For now an honeſt Man can't peep abroad,
And all chaſt Muſes dread the dangerous Road.
If in *Parnaſſus* any *needy Wit*
Should filch and Petty Larceny commit,
If he ſhould riffle Books, and Pilferer turn,
An Inch beſide the Noſe the *Felon* burn.
Let him diſtinguiſh'd by this Mark appear,
And in his Cheek a plain *Signetur* wear.

Chaſtiſe the Poets who our Laws invade,
And hold with *France* for Wit an Owling Trade.
Felonious *G*—— purſuing this Deſign,
Smuggles *French* Wit, as others Silks and Wine.
But let his Suff'rings doubly be ſevere,
For he both ſteals it there, and runs it here.

Condemn all thoſe who 'gainſt the Muſes Laws
Sollicit Votes, and canvas for Applauſe.
When *Torman* writes he rattles up and down,
And makes what Friends he can, to make the Town.
By Noiſe and Violence they force a Name,
For this leud Town has *Setters* too for Fame:
It is not Merit now that recommends,
But he's allow'd moſt Senſe, that makes moſt Friends.

In Panegyrick let it be a Rule,
That for the Senſe none praiſe a Wealthy Fool.
*D*———*n* condemn who taught Men how to make
Of Dunces Wits, an Angel of a Rake.
By Treats and Gifts our Youth may now commence,
Wits without Brains, and Scholars without Senſe.
They cry up *Darfel* for a Wit, to treat
Let him forbear, and they their Words will eat.
Great *Atticus* himſelf theſe Men would curſe,
Should *Atticus* appear without his Purſe.
Of any Price you may beſpeak a Name,
For Characters they cut, and retail Fame.
Bounty's the Meaſure of a Patron's Mind,
For they have ſtill moſt Senſe, that prove moſt kind.
Fame on Great Men's a Charge that ſtill goes on,
For Wits, like Scriv'ners, take for *Pro* and *Con*.
Without his Gold what generous *Oran* writ,
Had ne'er been Standard, ſheer *Athenian* Wit.

Thoſe who by Satyr would reform the Town,
Should have ſome little Merit of their own,
And not be Rakes themſelves below Lampoon.
For all their Libels Panegyrick's are,
They're ſtill read backward like a Witch's Pray'r.
*Ell*——*t*'s Reproofs who does not make his Sport?
Who'll e'er repent that *S*———*d* does exhort?
Therefore let Satyr-Writers be ſuppreſt,
Or be reform'd by cautious *D*——*ſet*'s Teſt.
'Tis only *D*——*ſet*'s Judgment can command,
Wi' the worſt Weapon in a Madman's Hand.
The Biting Things by that great Maſter ſaid,
Flow from rich Senſe, but theirs from want of Bread.
Whatever is by them in Satyr writ
Is Malice all, but his exceſs of Wit.

To

'To laſh our Faults and Follies is his Aim,
Theirs is good Senſe and Merit to defame.
In *D——ſet* Wit (and therefore ſtill 'twill pleaſe)
Is Conſtitution, but in them Diſeaſe.

Care ſhould be taken of the Impotent,
That in your Service have their Vigor ſpent.
They ſhould have Penſions from the Muſes State,
Too Old to Write, too Feeble to Tranſlate.
But let the luſty Beggar-Wits that lurk
About the Hill, be ſeiz'd and ſet to Work.
Beſides ſome Youths Debauches will commit,
And ſurfeit by their undigeſted Wit.
Th' intoxicating Draught they cannot bear,
It takes their Heads before they are aware.
Weak Brothers by Exceſſes it appears
Have oft been laid up Months, and ſome whole Years,
By one Debauch a tender Wit was try'd,
And he 'tis known was likely to have dy'd.
That neither Sick nor Poor you may neglect,
For all the Muſes *Invalids* erect,
An Hoſpital upon *Parnaſſus* Hill,
And ſettle Doctors there of Worth and Skill.
This Town can numbers for your Service ſpare,
That live obſcure and of Succeſs deſpair.
*Fracar* has many ſour Invectives ſaid,
And Jeſts upon his own Profeſſion ſpred,
And with good Reaſon, 'twill not find him Bread.
And ſome ſuch Doctors, ſure you may perſuade
To labour at th' Apothecary's Trade.
They'll Med'cines make, and at the Mortar ſweat,
Let 'em pound Drugs, they have no Brains to beat.

*F I N I S.*